

# THE LITTLE UNITY.

✻ TENDER, ✻ TRUSTY ✻ AND ✻ TRUE. ✻

VOL. II.

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No. 11

## RIGHTS DUE TO WILD FLOWERS.

S. MINNS.

Hast thou \* \* \* \* \*  
Loved the wood-rose, and left it on its stalk?

—Emerson.

I was once at a lovely, old-fashioned place in the country. The house had been built in old colony times, with deep fire-places and broad, easy staircases, and at the windows, wide window-seats, just the thing for children to climb upon and lean out over the broad window-sills; and, best of all, there were children who did all this, and enjoyed the house and country to their hearts' content. Outside the house were plenty of trees, then fields, and to the north thick woods, full of paths and wood-roads in every direction. Everywhere wild flowers grew abundantly. There were banks of violets along the wood-roads and by the edges of the fields. The ground was bright for yards with patches of wild pinks. All sorts of things grew around and in the pond below the slope by the house, and in the wet ground at the farther end of it. It was the same in the autumn. Where orchids had been in the meadow were now gentians, and the brook was marked in its course by a double scarlet line of cardinal flowers. There certainly never was such a place for flowers. What was the secret of it all?

"It is the children," said the mother, when she heard the question; "the children take care of them. They love flowers, as all children do, I believe, and all I have taught them, is, to love them without destroying them. It goes to my heart to see flowers picked and thrown away fading, and I have never suffered the children to be so cruel. Flowers grow readily where they grow naturally, and with a little aid they grow, as you see, luxuriantly; and as it is too shady near the house for a garden, the children care for the wild flowers where they grow."

"But what care do they have?" I asked. "They would have to work very hard to have such profusion of blossoms in any garden."

"Simply not picking every flower they find, is one, and probably the principal reason there are so many. They plant the ripe seeds as they find them, and in the autumn they do cover up certain favorite plants with earth and leaves for the winter. There is no hard work, certainly; only an affectionate thought and care," said the mother. "Just think how quickly flowers would become rare if each child daily brought home a great bunch to wither and be thrown away. Flower stalks are tough, too, and rather than break, come up, root and all, to a child's strong pull. Then there is an end to that plant. It almost seems as if some plants would die rather than lose their flowers."

"Do not think this fanciful," said the mother, after a pause. "After all, it is the children who gain by this self-control. It takes a good deal of resolution not to

pick a flower; but if they cannot keep their hands from a flower, how are they ever to learn forbearance? The battle must be fought sometime, and this is as good a battlefield as any."

I said to myself, I wish there were thousands of such mothers. Why are not children taught to stop and think, instead of pulling every bright blossom they see? The whole aim and life of a plant is to produce its flower and seed. If it loses its flowers it will have no seed, and then it can leave no descendants to inherit its beauty or fragrance and make the woods and hillsides beautiful for future children, as it made them for us. Sometimes a plant waits for years before it blossoms. Then it puts forth all its strength in the effort, and dies after it has ripened its seed; for that is the object of its whole life. Should a thoughtless child gather its flower, simply to smell and throw away after a short time, its whole life-hope is lost.

Our Legislatures are called upon to protect some of our rare wild flowers and ferns. The Hartford fern, the Cape Ann magnolias, the rarer orchids, are all threatened with extermination, and can only be saved by the arm of the law. It is the same with our native birds, with some of our beautiful native deer, with our trout in the mountain brooks. If our children learn forbearance when they are still young, they will never fail to respect the life of other created beings; for every animal, every plant, has a right to its own life. It is told of the French painter, Gros, that one of his students entering the studio one day with a beautiful butterfly, pinned it, still living, on his hat. Gros flew into a rage. "What!" he cried, "you find a beautiful being, and all you know is to torture and destroy it! Never enter my studio again. You are unworthy to be an artist." This was a man who extended to every created thing his sympathy, his respect for its life, his admiration for its beauty.

## A REPUBLICAN PLAYGROUND.

KATE GANNETT WELLS.

A republican playground is one where, though each child has a right to say what he wants, he must also learn to give up to the will of the majority. When children quarrel amongst themselves about their plays, and each party starts something different and wants the other's ground, there is always unhappiness. Some get sulky and go off home; some mope round discontentedly, and others stay and do what they can to still have a good time, although yielding to the victors;—the victors themselves are often the most unhappy, for though they have got their own way, they know they have been ugly and mean.

If children cannot be republicans in plays and games, they cannot, when grown up, be true citizens. Not only will they stand by their own party, whether it is wrong



or right, but they will abuse all other parties as desperately wicked, and will do tricky things to get people to vote their way. On a playground one also learns how to choose different leaders each week or day, so all have a chance to rule, just as our Presidents, Senators and Representatives take turns in being elected. Some times Presidents have had a second term; so, when a good leader is found in play, he is apt to lead for months; yet if he and they are both wise, the boys and girls will be taught how to play and lead successfully, so that all shall be equally trained;—and there are many things that can only be learned by leading.

In a republican playground there are no fags, *i.e.*, little ones who have to do all the errands and wait upon the older boys and girls; for girls have fags as well as boys. In England, years ago, these fags had a hard time; but English schools have learned to be ashamed of them; for the boys who were the rulers found how cruel they became towards them, and were so frightened at what they did, and still more at what they might be tempted to do, that they gave up the practice of having them.

Ants that have been living in a republic will not take a queen; and boys who have fags are just like the slave-making ants, who were lazy and made the others work so hard that one will find whole communities of ants changing their habits and working themselves. Probably they grew frightened, and so altered their habits.

In another way children on the playground remind one of ants. Very little ones play by themselves, sometimes singly, even, as do also rude and rough children, who, though old enough to go with others, often prefer to be alone. Thus there are classes of ants who do all their hunting in little groups or singly. No other ants come near them; they lead a separate existence, and are finally conquered by the superior ants, who build their houses better, live near each other, and go out to battle together. By and by those children who stay by themselves are overpowered by the stronger ones who play together; their little corner of ground is taken from them, and they have to go off, or join in the games of the others who are more numerous than they.

There is one more point of resemblance between the practices of ants and children. The latter often hurt each other's bodies and feelings when playing, and when they do so they ought to stop and see what they can do to soften the pain of either body or heart. Ants sometimes are as cruel to other ants as children are to each other; but now and then you find a child whom everybody makes use of as judge or peace-maker. So the Brazilian Indians make use of ants as healers of wounds; they use them as court plaster. They put the ant on to a cut in the flesh, and it bites the two lips of the cut. Then the Indian snips off its head, and the cut is tightly held together until it heals. The peace-making children say or do something, or put themselves to great inconvenience to make games go right; and though they may not have as busy a time, or as great fun as somebody else, they have made others have a better time, and stopped a fuss, and are happy in being thus useful.

Ants are true republicans. Children must be as true; and the playground is a first-rate place on which to learn to give up your own will, to take your turn in leading, and always to hold, first and highest, the best good and happiness of all the players collectively.

## THE LITTLE UNITY.

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Perhaps we might be allowed to call even so small a sheet as this a *midsummer* number; the time of year and the many talks about vacation and wild flowers suggest it. We hope you are where you can pick, observe, and enjoy them to the full.

It does one good to see the little boys, on a holiday afternoon, out in the fields picking wild flowers as eagerly as any of the little girls; exchanging kinds, and helping one another to find and gather, in truly social fashion. It isn't many years since the average school-boy thought it too much a girl's amusement for him to engage in and still hold his own respect and that of his fellows.

Do not pass over too lightly the very wise and beautiful thought you will find in the first column of this number. We do not need to *possess* every delightful thing we may happen to see about us in order to enjoy it. He is the richest among us who can learn to heartily take pleasure in the simple *sight* of the beauties around him, whether he be walking through the luxuriously blooming country fields, or upon the city sidewalks past the rich display of merchants' windows.

The *Standard* tells the story of a very little child who "*loved*" the dear, newly-hatched chickens by squeezing and kissing them till he "*dot 'em to sleep,*" and they didn't wake up any more. An old philosopher expresses pleasure in the things he sees, after this wise:

A wealthy man displaying one day his jewels to a philosopher, the latter said, "Thank you, sir, for being willing to share such magnificent jewels with me." "Share them with you, 'sir'?" exclaimed the man. "What do you mean?" "Why, you allow me to look at them, and what more can you do with them yourself?" replied the philosopher.

### HOW HE DID IT.

Two boys were given a lesson  
To master one bright day,  
While a host of charms in the out-door world  
Were luring them out to play;  
And the elder twitched and fretted,  
As a prisoned beast might do,  
While the younger went right at it  
And speedily was through.

"I wonder," said the teacher,  
As the younger walked away,  
"Why one of my boys so greatly  
Excels the other to-day?"  
A face that beamed with pleasure  
And pride was turned to her  
"It's because I buckled down to it!"  
Said the young philosopher.

—Scattered Seeds.



## SOMETHING ABOUT BOTANY.

E. S. ADAMS.

Do not let books, even good books, absorb all your leisure time. We are apt to take books too much with us. We take a journey and keep our eyes fastened on the page before us, instead of observing the scenes we are passing through; we sit by the seaside with a novel in our lap, and when we take a stroll in the country it is too often with a book in our pocket to entertain us when we sit down to rest. We forget that there is a world outside of books; that it is better to see and hear for ourselves than with the eyes and ears of others. I have often noticed the few people who, in this reading age, do not like to read, get more enjoyment from their eyes than others do. Eyes were made for seeing, but for seeing something else beside the printed page. We take a walk through country roads, and see that the sky is blue and the trees are green; but we neither know the kinds of trees nor the names of the pretty wild flowers. We think it important to know the name of such a king, who lived in such a country so many centuries ago, but we are not ashamed of not knowing the name of the tree at our gate. The various natural sciences—botany, geology, entomology, etc.—teach us many valuable and interesting facts; but much more than this, they teach us to use our eyes, and furnish us with an incentive to outdoor excursions, and throw into the bargain sunshine, fresh air and that greatest of blessings, health.

Do not be afraid of the long names. Young people have good memories, and the more you exercise them the better they become. Things must have names, and the names have their meanings, which help us to remember them. Do not think, either, that you will admire flowers less as you study them more; the works of nature stand the closest scrutiny. Who is it sees the beauties of the flowers as the botanist does? He sees a hundred graces where others see none. He loves not only the rose and the lily, but he can truly say with Wordsworth:

"To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

Now, I want to talk to you about flowers; but before I can tell you much about them, you must learn the names of the different parts.

In most flowers there are two sets of flower leaves. The outer one, the *calyx*, is usually green, and is often divided into *sepals*; the inner, the *corolla*, is white or colored, and is divided into *petals*. Beside these two kinds of *floral envelopes*, there are the *stamens*, consisting of a stem, called *filament*, and an *anther*, containing the *pollen*, or yellow powder, which sometimes rubs off on your nose when you are too anxious to inhale its fragrance, and in the center of all are the *pistils*, one or more of which consist of the head, called *stigma*, the stem, called *style*, and the part in which the seed is formed, called the *ovary*.

Take a buttercup, wild rose, single geranium, almost any wild flower except the dandelion and daisies, of which we shall speak hereafter, and see if you can find

these parts: 1st, calyx, divided into sepals; 2d, corolla, divided into petals; 3d, stamens, divided into filament and anther; 4th, pistil, consisting of ovary, style and stigma.

If there is only one floral envelope we call it calyx, whether it is green or colored.

Now, I should like to ask two questions before closing: What are flowers for? Do trees have flowers?

## WHAT TO READ.

SUMMER STORIES. Mrs. Molesworth. MacMillan & Co. N. Y. Price, \$1.25.

When you take up and begin this easy, chatty, pleasantly told account of how a family of young people spent a few of the wearily warm afternoons of a certain summer, you will feel like following their example and retiring to the most "Dingle"-like part of the grounds or fields about you, and taking all the small people from the house with you. The stories which they successively bring out for reading aloud upon these afternoons are of various kinds and for rather young children. One is a fairy tale in two parts; another, a queer little half ghost story. The first one of all tells about some swallows, and how the children saved their nest from being destroyed,—after which, with the happy imagination of childhood, they believed the birds and themselves to be on the most friendly terms; and how the thought of their returning again in the spring helped them to bear not only the flight of the birds for the winter, but the absence of their own mother for many long months. The last one gives an account of how a boy, in following his own judgment instead of his father's, found himself "left behind" when the train sped away with his parents and sister. He is restored to them after a few adventures, all of which, although ending happily, do not fail to lead him to the wise conclusion that his own judgment is not always the most reliable. The book is thoroughly cheery and healthful, as well as varied and entertaining.

## TO THE WATER-LILY.

Cleopatra art thou, regal blossom,  
Floating in thy galley down the Nile,  
All my soul does homage to thy splendor,  
All my heart grows warmer in thy smile;  
Yet thou smilest for thine own grand pleasure,  
Caring not for all the world beside,  
As in insolence of perfect beauty,  
Sallest thou in silence down the tide.

Loving, humble rivers all pursue thee,  
Wasted are their kisses at thy feet;  
Fiery sun himself cannot subdue thee,  
Calm, thou smilest through his raging heat;  
Naught to thee the earth's great crowd of blossoms,  
Naught to thee the rose-queen on her throne;  
Haughty empress of the summer waters,  
Livest thou, and diest, all alone.

—Constance Fennimore Woolson.

You often say, "How much good I would do with my money, if I were as rich as that man, or the other." How much good do you do now, with what you have? "Oh, if I had only time what would I not learn," says another. How do you spend the time you have?—*Scattered Seeds.*



## "Unity" Sunday School Lessons—Series XIII.

## STUDIES OF JESUS.

BY NEWTON M. MANN.

(The younger children may pass over the parts marked \*)

## LESSON I.

## JESUS AS SUCCESSOR OF THE PROPHETS.

## I. HOW MUCH DO WE KNOW ABOUT JESUS?

In the course of a dozen lessons we are going to see what we can learn of Jesus as a prophet, a successor of the great men of the earliest time, of whom we have already heard something. We are very familiar with the name of Jesus, but of the man himself we are not able to find out as much as we would like. We cannot tell how he looked, for he never sat for his picture. Of other notable persons of his time busts are preserved, so that we form quite definite notions of their appearance; careful biographies have been written, so that their careers stand out plainly. But our "heads of Christ" are purely fanciful, and our best notions of the man are rather dim. There is a haze about him as well as a halo. We see some of the old prophets, who lived five hundred years before, much more clearly. We know Jeremiah, for instance, almost as though we had seen him and heard him. He stands out distinctly, and we are in no doubt about him. But after all that has been written and said about Jesus we have to admit that we don't know nearly as much about him as we wish we did.

## \*II. SOURCES OF INFORMATION.

How is it that we are able to make out Jeremiah so well, to see him and know him? Because the story of his life was written on the spot. Who wrote that story? Is there any book left that Jesus wrote? Did he write any book or any word that we know of? Have we any account of him that anybody took down on the spot? His disciples, long after he was dead, wrote about him such things as they could remember, and afterwards others added such things as they had heard, and others again added such things as they thought the Christ *ought* to have said and done, and so in the course of a hundred years many had undertaken to tell the story of his life. (Luke I: 1-4.) Thus numerous "gospels" were produced, of which four remain. What are they called? We do not suppose that these were written by the persons whose names they bear. "The gospel according to Matthew" may have been drawn up according to traditions handed down from Matthew, and so of the others. Hence there are, as we should expect, agreements and disagreements.

## III. OUR TASK.

From these sources we must get the best idea we can of our hero. We are going to try to read these stories so as to make them cast as much light as possible on him. Did you ever hear of a man who climbed a tree that he might look over the heads of the crowd and see Jesus? (Luke XIX: 2-4.) He was a little man, and the crowd was in the way. The crowd is still in the way of little folks who want to see Jesus, and eighteen hundred and fifty years haven't made the sycamore any easier to climb. The crowd is bigger; the distance is wider, and the tree is higher. Do you care to try it?

## \*IV. THE OFFICE OF PROPHET.

What is a prophet? Foreteller, we are apt to say, but that was not his main office in Israel. There the prophet was, first of all, a reformer, a strong protester against some great wrong. The prophets were to Israel what Garrison and Whittier and Lovejoy and Gerrit Smith have been to America,—men who stoutly rebuked their countrymen for their sins. For a long time no prophet of note had arisen in Israel. The last (author of *Daniel*, 165 B. C.) had not spoken in his own name, but in the name of another, dead and buried four hundred years. Why had the prophets failed to appear? Were there no more sins to be rebuked? Or was it because the priests had devised ways to save the people without much reference to their sins?

## V. PROPHECY REVIVED.

The priests had taught the people to be very pious *on the outside*. They fasted, and said over their prayers, and kept holy-days, and were very precise about a thousand little formalities. In their anxiety to be religious they had forgotten to be good. There was need of some one to rise up and speak as the prophets of old had spoken, and put righteousness before all this everlasting rigmarole. Who is the first in gospel history to revive the prophetic speech? (Matt. III: 1-12.) Like which one of the prophets did John get himself up? (Compare Matt. III: 4 with 2 Kings I: 8.) What was Jesus' opinion of John the Baptist? (Matt. XI: 11.) But if John was a rough-looking, rude-spoken man like Elijah, which of the prophets do you think Jesus was like? Can you find passages in Isaiah or Jeremiah which are like some things that Jesus said?

## LESSON II.

## THE CHILD JESUS.

(Read Chapters I, III, and IV, of "Bible for Learners," Vol. III.)

I have said we do not know as much of Jesus as we could wish. This is especially true of his childhood, where the record leaves us very much in the dark. We would like to know where and when he was born, what were his sports when a boy, what his playmates thought of him, whether he went to school, what his "standing" was, whether he learned a trade, and a hundred other things about him. But these were matters not thought of by his immediate followers. Their attention was directed to his active life as a teacher and to his death upon the cross. When in after years the desire came to know something of his birth and childhood, all those who could have given information on these points were dead. In the absence of facts, stories, which we call legends, came into currency, some of them very sweet and pretty, and these we have now to consider.

## \*I. THE FAMILY RECORD.

It isn't much matter whose son Jesus was. He was so great a man that nothing could be added to his reputation by saying that So-and-So was his father or mother. He himself cared little about high birth or low birth. Descent from David was not one of his pretensions. (Mark XII: 35-37.) It has made Mary's fame to be his mother; but he gains nothing, we should say, by being reckoned of royal blood. But Jews did not think so. The tradition was strong with them that the Messiah was to be a descendant of David, and so the family record of Jesus must be made to show this. Two attempts to construct a pedigree are preserved. (Matt. I; Luke III: 23.) Do these agree? How many names in the first register are found in the second? How many more generations between David and Jesus in the second register than in the first?

## II. THE BIRTHPLACE.

It was a common notion in those days that everything in the life of Jesus corresponded with what some prophet had foretold. So wherever facts were wanting to make out the story, they could be supplied by just turning back to the Old Testament to see what the predictions were. This way of making history was very bad indeed; but it was rendered much worse by a strangely stupid application of the prophecies. From a passage in Micah (V: 2) the writer of the first gospel inferred that the Christ was to be born in Bethlehem, though the passage really has no such meaning. Out of this grew the lovely legend of the birth in Bethlehem, while in fact Jesus was probably born at his parents' home in Nazareth. This legend is much more ingenious than the pedigree. What reason is assigned for Joseph and Mary being in Bethlehem? How happened the inn to be full? What disposition did the landlord make of his guests from Nazareth? Where was the baby lain to take his first nap? Three other legends sprung up in connection with this.

## III. THE MAGI.

When, after he had passed away, Jesus came to be thought of as more than man, it was felt that so important a matter as his birth ought to have been marked by signs and wonders, and to have made a stir even in distant lands. To answer this feeling, the story of the "wise men of the East" and their moving star came to be told. It is more of a fairy story than the other. How does it run? I will not ask you who the "wise men" were, where they came from, where they went to, or what good ever came of their visit; but you may ask yourselves these questions.

## IV. THE ANGELS AND THE SHEPHERDS.

This is another legend to be accounted for in the same way. It seemed as though the coming of Jesus into the world ought to have made a stir, not only on earth, but in heaven. What is the story? When angels take part in the proceedings do you consider the proceedings real or fanciful? The story of the singing angels is a beautiful fiction; it is good poetry, but is it fact?

## V. THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

The one unpleasant and useless fiction associated with the birth of Jesus is the account of the flight into Egypt and the slaughter of the innocents by Herod! (Matt. II: 13-18.) We have good reason to think that no such horrid thing took place. The story was told because a text of the Old Testament (Hosea XI: 1) says something about God calling his son out of Egypt; and there seemed no way of calling Jesus out of Egypt without first getting him down there. Hence the dreams, and the angels, and the killing of 2,000 babies.

## VI. THE BOY IN THE TEMPLE.

One incident of the childhood of Jesus is related which has more signs of truth. His parents were good Jews, and every year they went up to Jerusalem to the great feast of the passover. How far is it? How did they travel? The little children staid at home; but Jesus was twelve years old now, and could journey with them. When they had done with the celebration and were well on their way back with their neighbors and friends, what happened? Did they return to Jerusalem? Where did they find their boy? Does it not seem that he must have been a very bright lad to hold conversation with these learned men?